

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-4 (Canceled)

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A method for producing a ceramic sheet, the method comprising steps of:

- sandwiching a first green sheet between spacers;
- baking the first green sheet while the first green sheet is sandwiched between the spacers; and

- producing a ceramic sheet having not more than 5 defects in an area of 900 mm<sup>2</sup> from the first green sheet, wherein
  - prior to the baking each of the spacers is a calcined sheet comprising spherical ceramic particles having an average particle diameter of 0.1 to less than 5 µm as a main component.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 5, wherein the content of the spherical ceramic particles is 80 wt% or larger with respect to the weight of the total ceramics contained in each of the spacers.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) A method for producing a ceramic sheet, the method comprising steps of:

sandwiching a first green sheet between spacers;

baking the first green sheet while the first green sheet is sandwiched between the spacers; and

producing a ceramic sheet having not more than 5 defects in an area of 900 mm<sup>2</sup> from the first green sheet, wherein

each of the spacers is either a second green sheet or a calcined sheet each comprising spherical ceramic particles having an average particle diameter of 0.1 to less than 5 µm as a main component, and

each of the spacers has a sintering temperature 50 to 300°C higher than the sintering temperature of the first green sheet.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) A method for producing a ceramic sheet, the method comprising steps of:

sandwiching a first green sheet between spacers;

baking the first green sheet while the first green sheet is sandwiched between the spacers; and

producing a ceramic sheet having not more than 5 defects in an area of 900 mm<sup>2</sup> from the first green sheet, wherein

each of the spacers is ~~either a second green sheet or~~ a calcined sheet each comprising spherical ceramic particles having an average particle diameter of 0.1 to less than 5  $\mu\text{m}$  as a main component,

~~at least one of the spacers is the second green sheet, and~~

~~the baking calcines the~~ at least one of the spacers to form at least one porous sheet having a porosity of 5 to 60%.

Claim 9 (Canceled)

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The method according to claims 5 or 6, wherein the spacers comprise the calcined sheet; and the calcined sheet includes ceramic particles 80 wt% or more of which are spherical ceramic particles having an average particle diameter of 0.1 to less than 5  $\mu\text{m}$ .

Claim 11 (Canceled)

**Claim 12 (Previously Presented):** The method according to claim 10, wherein the spherical ceramic particles have a ratio of a major axis thereof relative to a minor axis thereof of 1 to 3.

**Claim 13 (Canceled)**

**Claim 14 (Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the calcined sheet is obtained by calcining a second green sheet at a temperature that is 50 to 300°C lower than a sintering temperature of the second green sheet.